

CC1  
the acrylic acid is a product containing impurities and/or by-products and is obtained by catalytic gas phase oxidation of propylene and/or propane and where the acrylic acid includes protoanemonin as an impurity or by-product, and where said protoanemonin content of said acrylic acid is reduced to not more than 10 ppm.

CC2  
8. (Three Times Amended) A process for producing a water-absorbent resin, which comprises the step of treating acrylic acid and/or its salt with an alkali where the mixture of acrylic acid and/or its salt and the alkali is a solution containing 0.5 to 20 ppm oxygen, and thereafter polymerizing at least one component including acrylic acid and/or its salt as major components to produce a water-absorbent resin that is a neutralized salt, wherein the acrylic acid used as a raw material is a product containing impurities and/or by-products and is obtained by catalytic gas phase oxidation of propylene and/or propane and the acrylic acid contains not less than 10 ppm of an aldehyde as an impurity or a by-product, and where said treating step comprises subjecting the raw acrylic acid to a strong-alkali treatment with alkali metal hydroxides.

CC3  
12. (Amended) A process according to claim 11, wherein the aldehyde-treating agent is a hydrazine compound.

Please add the following claim.

CC4  
15. (New) A process for producing a water-absorbent resin, which comprises the step of polymerizing at least one monomer component including acrylic acid and/or its salt as major components to produce a water-absorbent resin that is a neutralized salt, wherein the acrylic acid is a product containing impurities and/or by-products obtained by catalytic gas phase oxidation of propylene and/or propane and where the acrylic acid includes protoanemonin as an impurity

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**Marked-up Claims:**

1. (Three Times Amended) A process for producing a water-absorbent resin, which comprises the step of [polymerizing] treating acrylic acid and/or its salt with an alkali, where the mixture of acrylic acid and/or its salt and the alkali is a solution containing 0.5 to 20 ppm of oxygen, and thereafter polymerizing at least one monomer component including acrylic acid and/or its salt as major components to produce a water-absorbent resin that is a neutralized salt, where said treating step treats at least 50 mol% of acrylic acid or salt of said monomer component, wherein the acrylic acid is a product containing impurities and/or by-products and is obtained by catalytic gas phase oxidation of propylene and/or propane and where the acrylic acid [has a] includes protoanemonin as an impurity or by-product, and where said protoanemonin content [that] of said acrylic acid is reduced to not more than 10 ppm[, and in that the resultant water-absorbent resin has a neutralization of not less than 50 mol%].

8. (Three Times Amended) A process for producing a water-absorbent resin, which comprises the step of [polymerizing at least one component including] treating acrylic acid and/or its salt with an alkali where the mixture of acrylic acid and/or its salt and the alkali is a solution containing 0.5 to 20 ppm oxygen, and thereafter polymerizing at least one component including acrylic acid and/or its salt as major components to produce a water-absorbent resin that is a neutralized salt, wherein the acrylic acid used as a raw material is a product [being] containing impurities and/or by-products and is obtained by catalytic gas phase oxidation of propylene and/or propane and the acrylic acid contains not less than 10 ppm of an aldehyde as an impurity or a by-product, and [further comprising the step of] where said treating step comprises subjecting the raw acrylic acid to a strong-alkali treatment with alkali metal hydroxides [followed by the polymerization step].

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